Newfoundland
Labrador

Board of Directors
Economic Diversification and Growth Enterprises

Activity Plan
2008-2011

Message from the Chair

On behalf of the Board of the Economic Diversification and Growth Enterprises (EDGE) Program, I am pleased to present the Board's 2008-2011 Activity Plan. In accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, this activity plan was prepared under the direction of the Board which is accountable for the achievement of the objectives outlined herein.

The EDGE Board is classified as a category three entity under the province's *Transparency and Accountability Act*. This means the Board must prepare an activity plan that clearly outlines the activities it will undertake, in the timeframe allotted, within its mandate and current budget and takes into consideration the strategic directions of government.

Sincerely,

Bob Healey

Bob Healey, B. Comm., CFP, FCA
Chairperson
Economic Diversification and Growth Enterprises Board

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Overview of the Board of Directors and the Economic Diversification and Growth Enterprises Program

The Economic Diversification and Growth Enterprises (EDGE) Program was established under the authority of the *Economic Diversification and Growth Enterprises Act* on December 16, 1994. The program was established to encourage new business investment in the province through a number of tax-related and other incentives.

Applications for designation as an EDGE corporation are evaluated by an independent Board (the Board) appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. The Board is currently comprised of five private sector members and three senior public sector officials who make recommendations with respect to the applications to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council through the Minister of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development.

The Board does not have its own staff. The Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development provides administrative support to the Board.

EDGE is an incentive-based program that is available to national and international companies who wish to establish a new enterprise in the Province as well as local companies that want to expand and local entrepreneurs who are interested in new business start-ups.

To be considered for EDGE status, a company must demonstrate that it's new or expanding business activity:

- has the potential for new capital investment of at least $300,000, or incremental sales of at least $500,000;
- has the potential to create and maintain at least 10 new permanent jobs in the province;
- offers the opportunity for long-term sustainable jobs and growth;
- would not take place in the province in the absence of the EDGE incentives, in preference to another location or at the time when it is proposed to do so;
- has a substantial net economic benefit to the province; and
- would not result in the company having a direct competitive advantage over other businesses already established in the province, if provided EDGE status.

Those companies that are granted designation as an EDGE Corporation and enter into a contract with government must reach and maintain these eligibility criteria, in order to receive Edge benefits, unless extenuating temporary circumstances exist for which the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may give a temporary reprieve and continue the benefits. EDGE contracts may be amended or revoked at any time if the company fails to comply with the terms of the contract entered into with government.

EDGE-designated companies are eligible to receive:

- a 100 percent rebate/remission on provincial corporate income tax and the provincial health and post-secondary education (payroll) tax. The tax "holiday" for eligible companies is 10 years on the Northeast Avalon and 15 years outside the Northeast Avalon (double EDGE designated companies only);
- a 50 percent rebate on federal corporate income tax for the periods referenced above;
- a further five-year phase-out period of partial rebates on the provincial and federal taxes referenced above, declining by 20 percent in each year of the phase-out period;
- a 100 percent rebate on municipal property and/or municipal business taxes for 10 or 15 years, followed by a five-year phase-out of such rebates, where individual municipalities elect to participate in the EDGE program; and
- access to unserviced Crown land for $1 where such land is required to implement the company's business plan.

Mandate

The mandate of the Board is to evaluate applications for designation as an EDGE Corporation and to make recommendations to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council through the Minister. When necessary, the Board may request additional information from applicants to enable proper evaluation of applications.

Legislative authority for the Board resides in the *Economic Diversification and Growth Enterprises Act* where:

> *"Applications for designation as an EDGE Corporation shall be evaluated by a board appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council...who shall make recommendations with respect to the applications to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council through the minister."*
>
> and
>
> *"Where the board requests it, an applicant for designation as an EDGE Corporation shall provide the other information...that the board may require to enable it to conduct a proper evaluation of the application."*

Values

The core values explain the character of the organization we promote and the action statements guide behaviour. The core values which guide the behaviour of the Board of Economic Diversification and Growth Enterprises are as follows:

Effectiveness	Each person makes informed decisions in a timely and professional manner.
Responsiveness	Each person builds relationships of trust and collaboration with other Board members.
Communication	Each person takes initiative to promptly share information with other Board members in support of the its mandate.

Primary Responsibility to Clients

The Board's primary responsibility is to Government and the Minister of the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development in the evaluation and recommendation of applications for designation as an EDGE Corporation. The primary clients of EDGE Corporation are clients of Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development and Department of Business.
The Board is also responsible to the applicants by rendering decisions on applications and making recommendations in a timely and efficient manner.

Support of Vision of Department

The vision of the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development is of "a diversified, competitive economy with productive and prosperous regions across the province".

The work of the Board supports the vision of the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development. Through the EDGE program, the Board assists in providing investment incentives that contribute to a diversified and competitive economy in all regions of the province.

Mission

The mission statement of the department identifies the priority focus area of the Minister over the current planning cycles. It represents the key longer-term result that the Minister and the Board will work towards to achieve the strategic directions of Government.

The mission of the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development is as follows:

> By 2011, the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development will "have stimulated economic and business development to foster regional and provincial prosperity."

The Board helps contribute to the department's mission of stimulating economic and business development through its work with the EDGE program which facilitates new business investment in the Province.

Objectives

The EDGE Board of Directors of the EDGE program evaluates applications for designation as an EDGE Corporation and makes recommendations with respect to the applications to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council through the Minister of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development.

The Board's primary function, that will represent the focus of the Board's work over the next three years is the evaluation of EDGE program applications. In consideration of government's strategic directions as well as the mandate and financial resources of the Board of Directors of the EDGE program, the following area has been identified as the Board's key priority for the upcoming year. The Board intends to report on these objectives each fiscal year through the Board's annual report.

Objective 1
The Board will have evaluated all EDGE program applications made within the preceding fiscal year that were ready for review by the Board.

Measure
EDGE program applications evaluated by the Board

Indicators

- Number of applications evaluated (that were made within the fiscal year and ready for the Board's review)
- Recommendations made to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council

Appendix

Strategic Directions

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social and or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one government entity. These directions are normally communicated by government through platform documents, Throne and Budget speeches, policy documents, and other communiqués.

The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

A full list of strategic directions for INTRD can be found in the Department's Strategic Plan. To view a copy, visit http://www.gov.nl.ca/intrd/strategicplan.htm.

The strategic directions that relate to the EDGE Board are provided below. Each strategic direction is comprised of a number of focus areas. As indicated in the following tables, some focus areas are addressed in the Board's activity plan while other areas are dealt with by other entities reporting to the Minister. Given its mandate, the Board plays a direct role in two components of these directions.

Title: Regional Diversification and Industry Growth
Outcome: Diversified and strengthened regional economies

Components of Strategic Direction	This direction is:	
	Applicable to other entities reporting to the Minister	Addressed in the Board's activity plan
Internal and external partnerships	X	
Coordination of public investments	X	
Expansion and diversification of existing businesses		X
New business investment		X
Coordinated labour market policy and development	X	
Capacity Building	X	
Entrepreneurship	X	
Strategic industry development	X	

Title: Business Promotion, Trade and Investment Development
Outcome: Increased business promotion, trade, and investment

Components of Strategic Direction	This direction is:	
	Applicable to other entities reporting to the Minister	Addressed in the Board's activity plan
Trade policy	X	
Export development	X	
Investment development		X
Enterprising culture	X	
Capacity Building	X	
Entrepreneurship	X	